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Senate

The Senate met at 1:01 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come, we thank You for Your mercy and blessing toward the United States throughout our history. Hear us as we seek Your continued guidance today. May the women and men of this Senate be so sensitive to Your grand vision for our Nation that they will be a conscience to our citizens in calling them back to You. Give these leaders soundness of judgment, courage in their decisions, and a united zeal to serve You together. You have warned us that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. Help us to affirm that those things on which we agree are of greater value than those things on which we differ. As we work together, deepen our understanding of one another's needs and enlarge our respect of one another's opinions. Make us one in the common cause of justice, righteousness, and truth. We all commit ourselves to the work of government for the honor and glory of Your Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON KYL, a Senator from the State of Arizona, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, today the Senate will immediately begin consideration of H.R. 4578, the Interior appropriations bill. I see that the chairman of the subcommittee is here and ready to proceed. Opening statements will be

made and amendments are expected to be offered during today's session.

At 3:30 today, however, it will be my intention to turn to the executive nomination of Madelyn Creedon to be Deputy Administrator of the National Security Administration. This was included in an earlier agreement, that we would complete debate and have a vote on this nomination prior to Wednesday of this week. I thought it was best we do it today. The vote will occur on her confirmation at 5:30 p.m. today.

During the Senate's consideration of the Interior bill, those Senators who have amendments should work with the bill managers in an effort to complete action on the bill as soon as possible. I commend the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior for the work they have done on this legislation. Many areas could have been added that would have been controversial and would have made it difficult to complete the bill. They were not included. I hope, therefore, that in a relatively short period of time we can complete action on this very important Interior appropriations bill.

Members should be on notice that it will be the leadership's intent to debate amendments to the DOD authorization bill during the evening sessions this week. That was agreed to before we went out for the Fourth of July recess. There was a unanimous consent agreement entered into that limits Senators to relevant amendments to the Department of Defense authorization bill. I believe all amendments had to be filed by the close of business that day, which was Friday of the week before last. Any amendment votes ordered during the DOD authorization bill will be postponed to occur the next morning. We are hoping we can proceed under that agreement so that Monday night, Tuesday night, and Wednesday night, if necessary, we can go to the Department of Defense authorization bill around 6:30 or 7 o'clock each night so we can complete action on this very important bill.

I emphasize again that this Department of Defense authorization bill has been pending in one form or another before the Senate for quite some time. A number of nongermane amendments were offered and voted on that are connected to this bill. They have been dealt with in one way or another now. We are ready to complete action on the underlying Defense authorization bill itself. It has a lot of very important items for the future of our military. Included among those are significant improvements in the health care provisions for our military men and women and their families and for our retirees and their families. This is important legislation. Hopefully, we can complete it under this procedure of taking up amendments each night and having votes at the beginning of the session the next morning.

As a remainder, cloture was filed on the motion to proceed to the death tax legislation prior to the July recess. Pursuant to rule XXI, that cloture vote will occur 1 hour after the Senate convenes tomorrow, unless an agreement is reached where we don't have to have a recorded vote on the motion to proceed, that we can pass that by voice vote and move straight to the bill itself. We haven't worked that out yet. That is always a possibility. Otherwise, though, we will have that vote 1 hour after we come in on Tuesday morning.

The Senate is expected to return to the reconciliation bill, which has a statutory time limitation of 20 hours, the latter part of this week. Of course, that is the reconciliation bill for the marriage penalty tax relief. Votes will occur each day of the Senate's session, with late nights and possibly a late Friday or Saturday session in order to complete the reconciliation bill.

I thank my colleagues for their attention. I emphasize that point again. It is our hope to go to the reconciliation bill on the marriage penalty tax Thursday, and complete action on that bill before the end of the session this

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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